1. The visual ranking tool effectively appeals to the visual learner by placing several options in a list form; something that is both familiar and comfortable to most all students. In a very simplistic manner this visual aid allows students to discuss and decide where items are in a literal ladder of importance, in essence this taps into and utilizes the student’s cognitive domain. It is also easy to move the items up and down as different ideas and points are brought to the table. The ability of the student to compare what answers they chose versus their classmates is also a valuable tool for not only the teacher, but the student. This exercise involves the affective domain as it essentially asks students to organize their values and perceptions. This is a subtle but sophisticated aspects of the tool; you articulated this well.
2. Under the Teacher Work Space: Your Projects click on the Set Up a New Visual Ranking Project. Fill in all of the fields on the page; making sure it is clear to the students that they must rank all of the items. Having students help brainstorm the list in class better involves them in the process. To add new teams go to Add New Student Teams at the top of the page. For multiple teams click on the Create a Set of New Teams. If modification is needed click on Team ID to change team members or passwords. The students can add comments to items by double-clicking, and the teacher can add comments, questions or feedback as well. The student comments feature is a real plus to help students articulate their reasoning
3. The Project Ideas and Unit Plans were interesting in that most all went beyond analytic thinking and tapped into larger moral and social issues with which students deal with on a daily basis. By relating the issues to their reality, combined with the visual representation of the list this is an incredibly powerful tool. Considering the high school English class I plan on teaching, this would be excellent to use on a unit for let’s say Romanticism, and what social and political changes were these poets/authors revolting against. You can create a list of current issues and have students rank them and then do the same for the issues during the Romantic era. How similar were those issues from the past? Why might some of them still be relevant? +5